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SUBJECT: WELCOME MESSAGE FOR STAFFDEL FORSYTH

REF: SECSTATE 124455

Welcome To Kathmandu

¶1. (SBU) Embassy Kathmandu warmly welcomes the August 23-26 visit of Minority Deputy Chief Counsel of the House International Relations Committee (HIRC) Bart Forsyth, along with Democratic Deputy Staff Director Peter Yeo, Democratic Professional Staff Member David Killion, and Staff Associate Todd Washam to Kathmandu.

¶2. (SBU) Overall control officer for this delegation will be Political/Economic Officer Rodney Hunter. He can be reached 24/7 via the Embassy switchboard at 977-1-441-1179, via mobile phone at 977-98510-91534, or via email at HunterRM@state.gov. The control officer and expediter will meet the delegation upon arrival and provide transportation.

¶3. (SBU) Post has made reservations at Dwarika's Hotel in Kathmandu for the night of August 23, with a room rate of 95 USD/night for a single (within per diem), inclusive of breakfast and taxes. The phone number at Dwarika's is 977-1-447-0770 and the fax number is 977-1-447-8378. Reservations at Dwarika's may be canceled up to one day prior to occupancy without penalty. Post has made reservations at the Trek-o-tel in Pokhara for the nights of August 24 and 25, with a room rate of 25 USD/night, inclusive of breakfast and taxes. The phone number at the Trek-o-tel is 977-061-528-996 and the fax number is 977-061-521-461. Reservations at the Trek-o-tel may be canceled up to two days prior to occupancy without penalty.

¶4. (U) Post will support the delegation's communications, transportation and administrative needs.

¶5. (SBU) Post has already provided a draft schedule via email to the delegation and Legislative Affairs (H).

Visas and Immigration

¶6. (U) A visa is necessary for all U.S. travelers to Nepal and should be obtained in advance if possible. If traveler is unable to obtain a visa before departure, an airport visa may be obtained upon arrival. A single entry visa valid for a 60-day stay may be obtained by diplomatic, official, and tourist passport holders at the airport for 30 USD payable in US currency. To facilitate the issue of an airport visa, traveler will need one passport-size photograph and will be required to complete an application form upon arrival.

¶7. (U) All departing travelers are required to pay an airport embarkation service fee of Nepali Rupees 1,356 (approx. 18

USD) if traveling to India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, or Bangladesh, or Nepali Rupees 1,695 (approx. 23 USD) for all other international destinations.

Health

18. (U) Respiratory and intestinal problems are common in Nepal. Visitors must exercise great care in what they eat and drink; food and water-borne diseases are common. All tap water in Kathmandu and most other areas of Nepal is contaminated. Travelers are advised to drink only water that has been filtered and boiled, and to exercise caution with bottled water (it can also be contaminated). Bottled drinks (soft drinks and beer) are generally safe; ice is not. Travelers are advised to use only treated water when brushing their teeth and rinsing out their toothbrush, and to keep their mouths closed when showering. Travelers should avoid eating/drinking from wet plates, utensils, and cups. It is advised to eat freshly prepared food, i.e., well-cooked and served hot. Cold food, especially those with dairy products, should be kept refrigerated and served cold. Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs should be well-cooked and served hot. Only fruits and vegetables that have been cooked or peeled should be eaten. Street food should be avoided due to poor sanitation. The following vaccinations are strongly recommended: Hepatitis A; Hepatitis B; Tetanus; Typhoid; Rabies; Japanese B Encephalitis. Malaria prophylaxis is needed only if there will be travel to the Terai, the lowland areas bordering India. Local medical facilities are sub-standard, except for a few outpatient clinics in Kathmandu.

Security And Threat Assessment

19. (SBU) The State Department has classified the crime threat in Kathmandu as high. Pick pocketing, purse snatching and other forms of street crime occur frequently, especially in areas frequented by tourists. Visitors should avoid walking alone after dark, carrying large sums of money, or wearing expensive jewelry. Valuables should be stored in safety-deposit boxes and should not be left unattended in hotel rooms. The Embassy's 24-hour emergency number (441-0531) should be kept handy, particularly when going out into the street.

110. (SBU) Since February 1996, Nepal has suffered a Maoist insurgency. While the Maoists have targeted primarily Nepalese Government and business facilities, there have been a number of attacks against organizations and companies associated with foreign interests. Large demonstrations in Kathmandu and elsewhere in Nepal often occur without notice. Relatively high levels of security exist inside the Kathmandu Valley, political agitation by students and party activists notwithstanding. There currently is a cease-fire between the government and the Maoists, but violence and clashes between Maoist and security forces are still possible. All U.S. Government personnel and contractors wishing to travel outside the Kathmandu Valley for official or personal reasons must have permission from the RSO. For certain districts, travel will be during daylight hours and for official business only. It is required that travelers contact the RSO again for updated travel information the day before undertaking any travel outside the Kathmandu Valley. All RSO clearances for the staff will be taken care of by the control officer prior to the visit.

Weather

111. (U) During the months of June through mid-September, the Kathmandu Valley is wet with monsoon rains; temperatures rarely exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Rain showers occur almost daily, but tend to fall in the afternoon hours. The temperature during the day ranges from 26 to 30 Celsius (78-86 degrees Fahrenheit). At night, the temperature cools down to about 18 to 21 Celsius (64 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit).

[¶12.](#) (U) Post looks forward to hosting you in Kathmandu.
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